

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6471

C O N F I D E N T I A L 1005

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, TW
SUBJECT: YANG CHIN-HAI

REF: STATE 037667

1. POLITICAL COUNSELOR CALLED ON MOFA DIRECTOR OF NORTH AMERICAN AFFAIRS WANG MENG-HSIEN FEBRUARY 17 AND INQUIRED INTO YANG'S CASE PER REFTTEL, PARA 2. MOFA UNDERTOOK TO OBTAIN DETAILS REQUESTED. IN THE MEANTIME, THEY WERE ABLE TO PROVIDE US WITH SOME INTERESTING DETAILS GLEANED FROM A JANUARY 25 VISIT TO GREEN ISLAND BY NORTH AMERICAN AFFAIRS FIRST SECTION CHIEF CHANG HSIAO-YEN. (CHANG MADE THE TRIP IN THE COMPANY OF A FEW OTHER MID-LEVEL GROG OFFICIALS AND WITH THE INTENT OF GETTING FIRST HAND EXPOSURE TO WHAT THE GROG OBVIOUSLY VIEWS AS A SERIOUS PUBLIC RELATIONS PROBLEM.) CHANG REPORTED THAT DURING HIS VISIT HE MET ALONE WITH YANG CHIN-HAI FOR SOME TEN MINUTES. HE SAID THAT YANG APPEARED TO BE IN VERY GOOD HEALTH AND THAT ALTHOUGH HE WELCOMED FAMILY VISITS AND WAS ALLOWED TO HAVE THEM ONCE A WEEK, HE WAS ALSO RELUCTANT TO PUT FAMILY MEMBERS TO THE EXPENSE AND TROUBLE OF COMING TO GREEN ISLAND. HE TOLD CHANG THAT HE HAD NOT BEEN TORTURED AND IN RESPONSE TO CHANG'S QUERY SAID HE DID NOT NEED ANYTHING.

2. COMMENT: TO JUDGE FROM MOFA ATTITUDES, THE GROG IS ACTIVELY SEEKING WAYS TO IMPROVE ITS HUMAN RIGHTS
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IMAGE, POSSIBLY INCLUDING ALLOWING SELECTED VISITORS ACCESS TO PRISONS AND INDIVIDUAL PRISONERS. WANG BROADLY HINTED THAT THEY MIGHT INVITE EMBASSY OFFICERS TO MAKE SUCH VISITS. ALSO, IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT MOFA NOW APPEARS TO BE KEEPING ITS OWN FILES ON INDIVIDUAL "HUMAN RIGHTS" CASES, INCLUDING ONE ON YANG TO WHICH WANG AND CHANG REFERRED.

UNGER

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NNN

Message Attributes

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